

STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS
APPROVING

Re: Wireless E911 Location Accuracy Requirements, *Second Report and Order*, PS Docket No. 07-114; Wireless E911 Location Accuracy Requirements, E911 Requirements for IP-Enabled Service Providers, *Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Notice of Inquiry*, PS Docket No. 07-114, WC Docket No. 05-196.

I welcome these steps forward as we work to enhance the safety of the American people—always Job One for the FCC. Enhanced 911 saves lives. Experience has shown us that. The steps we take today will further improve the ability of first responders accurately to locate wireless E911 callers in emergencies. We do so based on a solid record and with a practical approach that relies on currently available technologies. More importantly, our actions reflect a general consensus among important E911 stakeholders—including the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials and the National Emergency Number Association—on how to get this job done. So it's action time and today we take action.

We have come a good long distance since I came to the agency in 2001. I arrived at a time when carriers were regularly missing deadlines for deploying E911, manufacturers were failing to make equipment and software available quickly enough, and technology was still pretty basic. The Commission has been generally aggressive in recent years in encouraging all stakeholders and players to push the envelope and accomplish what needs to be accomplished to make Enhanced E911 a reality. With life-critical technology like E911, we must always do better than “business as usual.” We must make the extra effort, expend the necessary resources and keep the objective front-and-center. With the consensus adopted in today's Order, I think we are clearly on the right road.

While I support today's decision, including its recognition of the unique challenges facing rural and remote communities, I remain worried. We allow, for example, network-based carriers to exclude from location accuracy compliance those counties where triangulation is not technically feasible. I understand that the technology and infrastructure in a given area today may not allow a carrier to comply with the specific location accuracy targets we require. That said, locating emergency callers living in rural America is no less important than locating emergency callers in other parts of the country. I expect carriers, even in those areas excluded from location accuracy compliance, to take every step technologically possible to maximize location accuracy for E911 calls and to do it with the sense of urgency that the safety of the people compels. We must never lose sight of this particular challenge as we move forward with implementation of the National Broadband Plan and work to expand wireless infrastructure in rural America. More towers mean not only more broadband, but can also mean more accurate E911 . . . and more lives saved. I am pleased we recognize that rural Americans cannot be left in the lurch going forward.

By setting a sunset date for the location accuracy exclusion, we encourage carriers and manufacturers to expand A-GPS handsets in their subscriber base, which will make the network-based exclusion unnecessary in the long term.

Today we also launch a separate and much-needed examination into the next phase of wireless E911 location accuracy and reliability. With the explosion of wireless usage, devices and applications, including those encompassing voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), we seek comment on the ongoing evolution of wireless technologies and the implications for location accuracy. Consistent with the National Broadband Plan, we look at the impact of Next

Generation 911 (NG911) deployment and its potential for location accuracy. The FCC should always be looking for ways to harness the benefits of technology advances to improve accuracy and speed of response in emergencies, and to provide more interoperable and integrated emergency response capabilities for PSAPs, hospitals and first responders.

The Chairman is to be commended for bringing this important item to the full Commission for consideration. I particularly want to thank the staff of the Public Safety and Homeland Security for their hard work and thorough analysis. I look forward to working with my colleagues, with the staff and with all E911 stakeholders as we continue to strengthen E911 requirements and capabilities.